

FREEMEN COMMUNITY MEETING

Your Community, Your Voice

Record of Meeting and Actions

6:00 pm, Wednesday, 3 December 2008

Held at: Aylestone Leisure Centre, 2 Knighton Lane East

Who was there:

Councillor Dale Keeling

Councillor Bill Shelton

INFORMATION SHARING – ‘CAROUSEL’ SESSION

The following information stands were sited in the room. Members of the public visited the stands and were given an opportunity to meet Councillors, Council staff and the local Police and to bring enquiries and raise and issues.

WARD COUNCILLORS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Members of the public could talk to their Ward Councillors or ask any questions from the officers present.

CLEANSING SERVICES AND THE CITY WARDEN

Malcolm Grange, Head of Street Scene Enforcement, Environmental Services and Jessica Phillips, the City Warden for the Freeman area were available to talk to Members of the public about the cleansing services that the Council provided.

LEICESTER LOCAL INVOLVMENT NETWORK (LINK)

Jon Davis was available to talk to Members of the Public about healthcare provision

NHS LEICESTER PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Leon Charikar was present to deal with queries relating to the local Primary Care Trust.

HOUSING – LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

Representatives from the Housing and Neighbourhood Management Teams were available to talk to members of the public about local housing and related issues.

At the conclusion of this informal session members of the public were invited to take their seats and take part in the formal session of the meeting.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received for Stephanie McBurney of the Domestic Violence team.

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda, and/or indicate that section 106 of the Local Government Finance act applied to them.

No such declarations were made.

23. RECORD OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting dated 3 September 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

24. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Malcolm Grange, Head of Street Scene Enforcement, Environmental Services, gave a presentation on the role of the new City Wardens that were being introduced in some areas of Leicester. Malcolm informed the meeting that the City Warden scheme was a pilot scheme intended to improve the environment by identifying issues and promoting responsibility by providing a visible presence in the community. Jessica Phillips, the City Warden for the area was introduced to the meeting. It was explained that Jessica could be easily spotted in a bright red coat and would be patrolling the area to tackle problems such as litter, fly tipping and graffiti. She would be able to report issues to the correct services to resolve problems and act as a link between local residents and the City Council. Residents could approach her with environmental issues and she would liaise with police and other services to build intelligence to reduce environmental crime. She would be able to give fixed penalty notices to perpetrators where appropriate and could also issue dog control orders where necessary.

Other duties of the Warden would include liaising with local businesses to promote environmental responsibility and a duty of care. Where the Wardens were aware of abandoned vehicles and nuisance vehicles (inconveniently parked for selling or repair) they would report these directly to the relevant section. Malcolm Grange asked people to encourage their friends and neighbours to approach the Warden with any environmental queries and local issues. People were invited to contact Jessica on 0116 252 7001 if they had any such problems.

25. POLICE JOINT ACTION GROUP (JAG) ACTION PLAN

Dave Budd, Leicestershire Constabulary gave a presentation regarding police work in the area. He advised that the Freeman area was covered by three police teams; Saffron, Aylestone and Welford Road Commercial. He explained that each team was responsible for local community priorities in addition to their usual day-to-day business.

The priorities were prepared in consultation with the local community and were specific to the needs of the residents. So far the priorities had addressed issues such as anti-social behaviour, the use of illegal drugs in and around Saffron and graffiti in Belvoir Drive.

He advised that a newsletter detailing the local police priority actions was widely available and distributed with the local 'In the Park' newsletter. Copies were also available in public buildings.

Dave Budd explained to the meeting that each team had a sergeant, a constable and police community support officers. Some teams also had volunteers.

Dave explained that it was important that the public share any knowledge of crime with the police. Information could be given in confidence to the police in a variety of ways, and anonymity could be maintained if required. The police were in constant consultation with the public and encouraged them to highlight any issues of local importance. The police aimed to attend all community meetings to consult and ascertain the priorities for the ward.

26. VELODROME UPDATE

Neil Evans, Investment & Development Manager, Resources Department and Paul Edwards, Head of Sport Services, Regeneration and Culture Department answered questions on the recent demolition of the Velodrome and the proposals for the usage of the land.

They explained that the Velodrome was closed in early 2000 due to health and safety issues. Fires and vandalism had made it unsafe and the council had decided to demolish it with a view to eradicate the anti social behaviour in the area.

The meeting raised questions regarding the plans for the use of the land. It was confirmed that the land use was not prescriptive and would not necessarily therefore be used for sports facilities. Some of attendees felt strongly that the land should be used to provide sport facilities in the area. Concerns were expressed that the Council had neglected the Velodrome and this had resulted in the deterioration of the facilities. They also felt that the land should be earmarked for sports and recreation, as that was what the land had always been used for. There were concerns raised regarding the amount of money invested in sports and recreation in the area, compared with other areas of the city. Attendees felt that anti-social behaviour resulted from lack of facilities and 'something to do' for the youths in the ward.

A member of the public stated that Nottingham had facilities such as an ice rink that Leicester did not have. Officers explained that Nottingham had received £22 million from the lottery fund but lottery money was now earmarked for the 2012 Olympic Games, which meant that such funding was not available for other projects. The City Council had spent money on a new running track and changing rooms in Saffron Lane, which meant that it had become an official 2012 preparation camp.

Money had also been invested in the Saffron Kingfisher centre. It was reported that renovation had taken place to bring the changing facilities up to F.A. standards. Renovation had also taken place of the play facilities in Meadow Gardens and Aylestone Field. The meeting also heard that £90,000 was being spent on new tiling at Aylestone Leisure centre.

Residents were concerned that they had less than 24 hours warning that demolition work at the site was going to be carried out. They requested that they would be informed of any future developments on the plot. In response, Officers explained that the contractor was arranged within a short time scale, to demolish the Velodrome, and so there was not as much time to alert the local residents, as they would have liked. They also confirmed that any building would be subject to a planning application and therefore, subject to representations and the normal planning processes.

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 4 March in the Marriott School at 6pm.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 1) Questions arose regarding the Aylestone Meadows factory site that was owned by British Gas. They were currently researching the possibility of leasing the site but officers assured the meeting that any developments would need planning permission.
- 2) A request was made for residents to be given an update on the 10,000 Trees Project, at the next Freeman Community Meeting.
- 3) Councillor Shelton reported that he was Chair of the Saffron Fete Committee and discussions were currently taking place as to a possible venue for 2009. In the past the fete had taken place on the recreation ground but it was not certain that this would be available next year.
- 4) A member of the public asked what was happening with the ward action plan.

Jerry Connolly, the Member Support Officer to the Community Meeting explained that the ward action plan would need to be updated, following the demolition of the Velodrome as anti social behaviour around the Velodrome had been one of the highlighted problems.

Action	Officer Identified	Deadline
To update the Freeman Ward Action Plan, following the demolition of the Velodrome.	Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer	24 December 2008

29. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 7.35

